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172 Tamerlane buildings in Samarkand, one finds not a trace of stone buildings in the plains. These are found only in mountain regions, in the Darvaz and Badakhshan ranges and the like, where even today in some places the houses are erected of unhewn stones, for the simple reason that there is no loess there and the climate is damper than in the lowlands.

In prehistoric times the inhabitants of Turkestan must have lived in artificial underground caves and passages made in the loess ground; this is demonstrated among other things by the passages and holes found in Samarkand and lately also near Karti on the Amu-Darya. These are extensive and form unmistakable underground towns.

354 The interior arrangement of the dwellings is just as simple as the dwellings themselves. There are no stoves anywhere; instead, usually, I have found a 'kamin' /fire place/ in Afghan Turkestan and among the Taranchis of the Ili valley. /237/ which are completely similar to those used by us. Real heating of the living rooms would not be possible in any case even with a stove, because the doors close only very imperfectly, and are even completely lacking among the poorer people, and because the window openings, when there are any are either quite open or most often pasted over with thin paper. Glass windows are not used by the natives, and both the very rich people and the khans themselves pass the cold season of the year in unheated rooms into which the air enters freely. The felt yurts /tents/ of the nomads offer much better protection in winter against the cold and inclement weather than the dwellings of even the richest of the sedentary population. The Kazakhs are therefore perfectly right in preferring their yurts to the walled dwelling houses.

In order to keep warm during the bitterest cold the natives of Turkestan use wrought-iron braziers, resting on four legs, like those in use in ancient times in Greece and Rome. /Figure 87, p. 69a. Caption: Brazier of Turkestan./ This brazier, after it is filled with glowing embers, is placed under a small table, round or square, twenty to forty centimeters in height, which is then covered with a large quilted cotton coverlet. The members of the family now seat themselves on the floor around this little table and stretch their hands and feet out under the coverlet in the space warmed by the coals. In Figure 87 there is such a brazier drawn from life, shown with the tongs and coal shovel which belong to it.

For the poor people who cannot afford the luxury of a brazier, there is nothing left but to freeze and sometimes to freeze to death, par-

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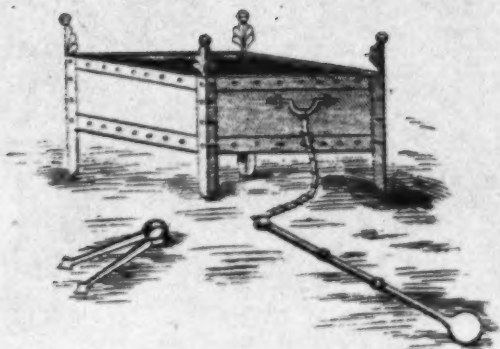


Fig. 6. Brazier of Turkestan.

354 ticularly if they lack an adequate supply of warm clothes and covers as well. Every great cold costs a number of lives in the towns of Turkestan and the natives judge the degree of cold, in the absence of meteorological instruments, by the number of persons frozen to death during the course of a night. In 1879, when the temperature once sank to 27° Centigrade below freezing in Tashkent, in the Sart section of [17] that town, 126 natives froze to death /238/ in one night. Here one can marvel at the stubbornness with which the people hang on to what is traditional. Although the natives have the Russian household establishments before their eyes and are aware of their efficiency, it still does not occur to them to imitate the latter, even when they have the means to do so.

342 The doors which lead from the courts into the living rooms are usually very low, so that one can only pass through by stooping. In most cases, these doors take the place of the window as well, and therefore are present in large numbers in the larger rooms. The doors always consist of two parts which do not move on hinges but on two pegs fixed in the lintel and the threshold. They always push inward and are so small that each time one must open both parts in order to enter.

[353] Among the rich the door wings are usually adorned with artistic intertwining arabesques carved in the wood, or at least painted with bright red, green or blue colors. Since in Turkestan poplar wood, which is not very solid, is used almost exclusively for building and wood carving and it is usually worked and finished before it has completely dried out, the door posts and door wings are always more or less warped as they dry out, and consequently they close either badly or not at all. The fastening of the door is peculiar: outside one part of the door is a short iron chain, and on the other part a peg is fastened ending in a ring. The last link of the chain, which has a slit through it, is hung over this ring. If such doors are to be locked, a padlock is hung on the ring mentioned above.

There are windows only in the houses of the richer people, while the poorer ones must be satisfied with the light entering through the doorway. The window opening in its dimension is always greater horizontally than vertically in private houses, is always found over the door, and therefore in every room there are as many windows as doors. The window opening is either left completely open or it is covered with a grating of wood or alabaster in order to prevent the entrance of swallows and sparrows, of which there is an enormous number here, as well as of other birds. The sticks of which the wooden

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For the baking of bread a special baking oven of burnt clay is used. It has the form of a large overturned water /245/ cask, with no floor and an opening in the side. This oven, which is made all in one piece and sold ready-made at the bazaar is either /Figure 93. ¹⁷⁶ Caption: Court with veranda in the fortress at Samarkand. In the background is the stone, on which the accession to the throne of the emirs of Bukhara in earlier times took place. / buried underground or walled into the court wall and surrounded with a thick layer of clay so that both openings /246/, the one on top and that on the side, remain open. When bread is baked in such an oven a strong fire is laid inside it; after this has gone out, the coals and ashes are removed and then the thin flakes of bread are pasted to the heated inner walls of the oven from above. In many places, especially in the colder mountainous regions like Badakhshan, these baking ovens are buried in the middle of the living rooms, in the floor, and thus they also serve for the heating of the living quarters (Figure 94). ¹⁷⁶

/Figure 94. Caption: Baking Oven of Turkestan. /

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The privies in the dwellings of the natives are arranged very suitably and in keeping with the local conditions. In a distant part of the court a separate large room is built. In the middle of this space there is a pit about 8 meters deep with a diameter of about 3 meters, which is covered over with heavy, well cut, wooden planks. In these planks a small bamboo-shaped slit is cut out. Naturally there are no seat boards since the natives are not accustomed to sitting on chairs. A hole is left in the roof just over the slit mentioned above, in which a short pipe of burnt clay is placed. The open door opening and this roof opening provide adequate ventilation and there is no sign of a bad smell. When the sunken pit is finally almost full after many years it is then filled up with earth and the privy is moved to another place. Care is taken almost always to have a canal flowing by in which the residents may make their ablutions in the manner prescribed by the Koran.

Since in Turkestan every house owner is at the same time an owner of horses, the stables have a very important role in the dwellings of the natives. The stalls are always built next to the court wall, and are usually on the opposite sides of the court square from the dwelling quarters, sometimes even occupying three sides of the court. The stalls are little more than sheds and the supporting girders are fixed in the court wall on one side and are supported on the other by

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Fig. 22. Baking Oven of Turkestan.

342 In the walls there are many niches of various sizes, decorated with arabesques and sometimes with a painting of a flower, without perspective. The depiction of animals or humans is strictly forbidden by the Koran. In addition to this, the rich decorate the ceilings with bright colors and make their windows, if not of glass, at least with decorated wooden or plaster lattices. The floors of the houses are either of earth or paved with flat square fire brick.

[136] Sart houses and the old clay partitions, which always have many cracks, are inhabited by 'falanga' (a kind of poisonous spider) and scorpions. The sting of the falanga, if precautionary measures are not observed, can be very painful and can sometimes be fatal.

The living quarters are divided into two halves: the men's and the women's (the harem). Usually below the harem there is another deeper courtyard.

352 /390/ There is no furniture. The furnishing of the rooms consists of Russian chests sometimes covered by rugs. The rich also cover their floors with rugs or carpets without nap (palas). They do not make stoves. 354 In order to keep warm in winter, they put hot coals in a hollowed out place in the middle of the room, or simply into a clay vessel (pan), and over this they put a stool. The stool is covered with a blanket and its ends touch the ground. Then the Sart sits or lies around the heater and covers his feet with the blanket.

341 In their construction they use neither a level nor a plumb line, so that all the